BLOODQUEST: THE FALL OF BROTHER PROTEUS!!

29 $2.95 US £2.00 UK

WARHAMMER MONTHLY

Alive or dead you're coming with me!!

—THE RETURN OF KAL JERICO!

plus: MORDHEIM • TITAN • DARKBLADE

WARHAMMER MONTHLY

By the Blood God, but I'm bored. Just how long can a mighty Chaos Warrior like myself sit around here in this pit of gloom doing nothing. My armour's starting to sieze up and I'm sure that was rust I found on my once-trusty broadsword this morning.

Throne of Earth, *will you ever stop your infernal mooning? If it wasn't the height of blasphemy to say it, I would almost admit that I can understand why your foul mosters have banished you out here! You must have been boring your disgustingly vile Dork Gods to tears with your interminable whinging and wailing!*

Curse you, Ultramarine! How do you manage to stay so calm and cheerful, you disgusting goody-goody? I bet you have some ancient mystical technique, handed down over the centuries by generations of battle-brothers, that allows you to sit around boring each other stupid and not exploding in a fit of rage!

But Gutspew...

Well I'm a servant of the Blood God, Lord Khorne, master of all, and I refuse to sit down and relax! I won't do it! The fire of battle rages within my veins! My sword is ever at hand and I thirst for the savage glory of–

Oi, Gutspew!

What?! What!?! How dare you interrupt me! Why, I shall cleave you into seven thousand pieces, you–

Look here! *Here's how I stay calm and collected! There's no secret technique involved. Look: the new issue of Warhammer Monthly, packed full of all-action stories from across the Segmentum! Who needs to be bored or frustrated with such a cool comic to hand?*

Oh... Well. I see... Erm... Erm, can I... can I have that after you?

Ha, wait your turn, Chaos filth!

Inside this comic...

BLOODQUEST
Leonatos and his Blood Angels find their will-power tested in the Slanneshi City of Temptations.

TITAN
Refitted and rearmed, Titan Dictatio sets out to avenge the loss of Scout Titan Falco, in the ongoing battle against the inhuman Tyrannids.

KAL JERICO
In the toxic labyrinth of the Underhive, Kal and sidekick Scabbs find that everybody has their price.

MORDHEIM
Who will be the last man standing when Ulli and Marquand visit the brutal Pit Fights?

DARKBLADE
Malus Darkblade finally faces his Daemon foe, and must fight for not only his life, but his immortal soul!

GAMES WORKSHOP

A BLACK LIBRARY PUBLICATION

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SOMEWHERE IN THE WARP

HERETIC! HERETIC!

• I em Lord Malorum Skulltaker, Warrior of Khorne, Harvester of Skulls. I have ravaged entire worlds, spilled the blood of the weak, feasted upon the flesh of the mightiest warriors in existence. I am the unstoppable one.

I had spent a millennia killing in the name of Khorne. I was indestructible, complete and all of the above until one fateful day.

During my campaign of destruction and terror through the island world of Britannium I chanced upon a large temple. This temple was ancient and encrusted in frescoes detailing the faces of tormented souls, all scholars of some sort judging by the quills and inks in hand. Above the entrance to the temple the words "Black Library" were carved into the backbone of what would have been in it's prime a mighty dragon or sea serpent, much like the kind I have killed so often and with ease.

I felt an indescribable presence within this temple, I was drawn to it. At the time I thought it was the voice of my master calling me. I bellowed my lord's praise and ran under those black arches into the temple. What I found inside nothing could prepare me for.

Upon an altar in the main chamber rested a massive tome surrounded by the light of flickering candles, I paused and pondered as to what this tome might contain, then made my way over to it, and opened the dusty cover. I remember seeing as I opened the cover, the title of the tome, Warhammer Monthly scrawled in spidery script.

As I read the magnificent stories and marvelled at the brilliant artwork, I felt my body and mind change, I no longer felt the desire to kill, and I no longer felt the desire to take skulls for my lord. I only desired to read more of this absorbing tome, to consume more stories, drool over more artwork, consume, read, more and more.

With a sudden burst of pain I felt an extra set of arms burst from my chest. These arms were small and with delicate hands that yearned to turn pages. From my forehead sprouted an extra set of eyes taking in even more glorious detail of these pages. I turned a page and kept on reading. Drooling in awe, I turned another page, then another, then another...

I know not how long I have been here consuming this literature. I have a new master now, the dark one, the Black Library. I now know the purpose of my existance; it is to remain in this wondrous place and read till the end of my days. I praise my new master for he has shown me to the true path! Ink For The Art God! Praise to Warhammer Monthly!

— Gibbering media spawn, Adam Johansen, Tascott, Australia

By the Throne, but you had me going there, Scout-Novice Johansen! For a long while I thought these were the confessions of a ravening blood-sucking spawn of the Dark Gods! It was all I could do not to blast your pustulent carcass off the face of the Segmentum with my trusty bolter. But praise be, it was all a joke, a merry jest to lift my spirits out here in the Warp. Have a t-shirt. Hope it fits, what with the extra arms and all... Ho ho.

• Dear Black Librarians,

I am a 39 year old professional. I have collected, painted and played with many Games Workshop products for over a decade. I am a very avid reader. I bought Dan Abnett's book 'First and Only" solely because of my interest in the 40k universe. I frankly was expecting the actual prose and story to be pretty crappy. I was wrong. The imagery, characterizations, and details are first rate and he creates wonderful imagery and atmosphere.

His writing reminds me of Bernard Cornwell and his Sharpe series, with all of the deception, the intrigue, the heroics and the panoramic action. It's a damn good yarn and I think that it would even work for those that are unfamiliar with what "bolters" and "suspension fields" are. Please let Dan know how much I enjoyed it and how much pleasure I got out of reading it. What a hoot! I can hardly wait for the next one.

— Andrew Long (an unsophisticated North American colonist), via email

Pray tell, what are these books of which you speak, and where can a poor Ultramarine cast adrift upon the measureless wash of the Immaterium get them? But one thing: surely there cannot be a human alive who does not know what a bolter is? For shame!

• This is just to say that your web-site is red hot – full of cool info on novels (with ace downloads) as well as Warhammer Monthly articles and the limited edition models like Leonatos and Kal, and the cool links to other Games Workshop sites. Keep up the ace work!

— Richard Hey, via email

• I must say that WHM gets better and better with each issue. I've almost forgotten the disastrously bad 'Ravenwing' (ugh!) story in the light of recent offerings. My favourites are:

Bloodquest 2: I especially like the way Leonatos and crew often defeat the hordes of Chaos despite overwhelming odds and yet do so in believable ways that don't insult my intelligence, like Ravenwing did. The Blood Angels usually win with a minimum of effort because they are a disciplined, reasoning force that uses intelligence and carefully planned actions in direct opposition to the mindless violence their chaos enemies often fall into. The improved artwork helps a lot.

Titan: I like this story simply because I'm a certified tech junkie. How about an Imperious Dictatio poster someday? Better art would help.

Kal'Jerico: I like the Jerico stories because he's easier to relate to a man that acts out of understandable, rational motivations, as well as on occasion friendship and common decency instead of fanaticism and 'warrior honour' is someone most readers can relate to better.

Meanwhile, here are some stories I'd like to see –

Callidus: I'd like to see a multi-part story about a Callidus assassin on a mission to kill a renegade governer.

Tankers: How about a story featuring a Leman Russ, alone behind enemy lines, that must fight it's way back home through a chaos army. The characters created in the short story 'Titan Legion' (Howler, Chief, Erickson, etc.) would be a good place to start.

Adeptus Arbites: These guys have really been ignored in 40K, despite a few fine miniatures. How about a 'law and order' type story dealing with the kind of action the judges see daily?

Rogue Trader: A story featuring an interstellar merchant and his ship might be cool, especially if you used the 'Abdul Goldberg' character from 40K's first edition.

Well that's about it for now. Keep on doing great stories from the 41st millennium. By the way, I take an extra large shirt size.

— Lord Russ, East Alton, Illinois, USA

Is that a fact? I take an extra large suit of power armour myself, and an equally hefty bolter, and if you think you can disparage those noble veterans of the glorious Ravenwing you might just get a taste of them! Other than that, my lord (ahem hem hem), I thank you most heartily for your suggestions. As soon as I am able to send a message back to loyal Imperial forces I shall pass them on to the scribes of the Administratum forthwith!

Remember, dedicated servants of the Emperor: those letters deemed worthy enough each issue will win a sacred glow-in-the-dark Black Library t-shirt. You can send your transmissions to:

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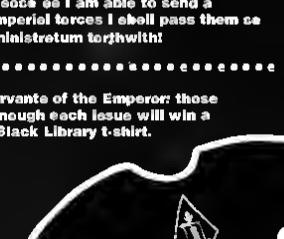
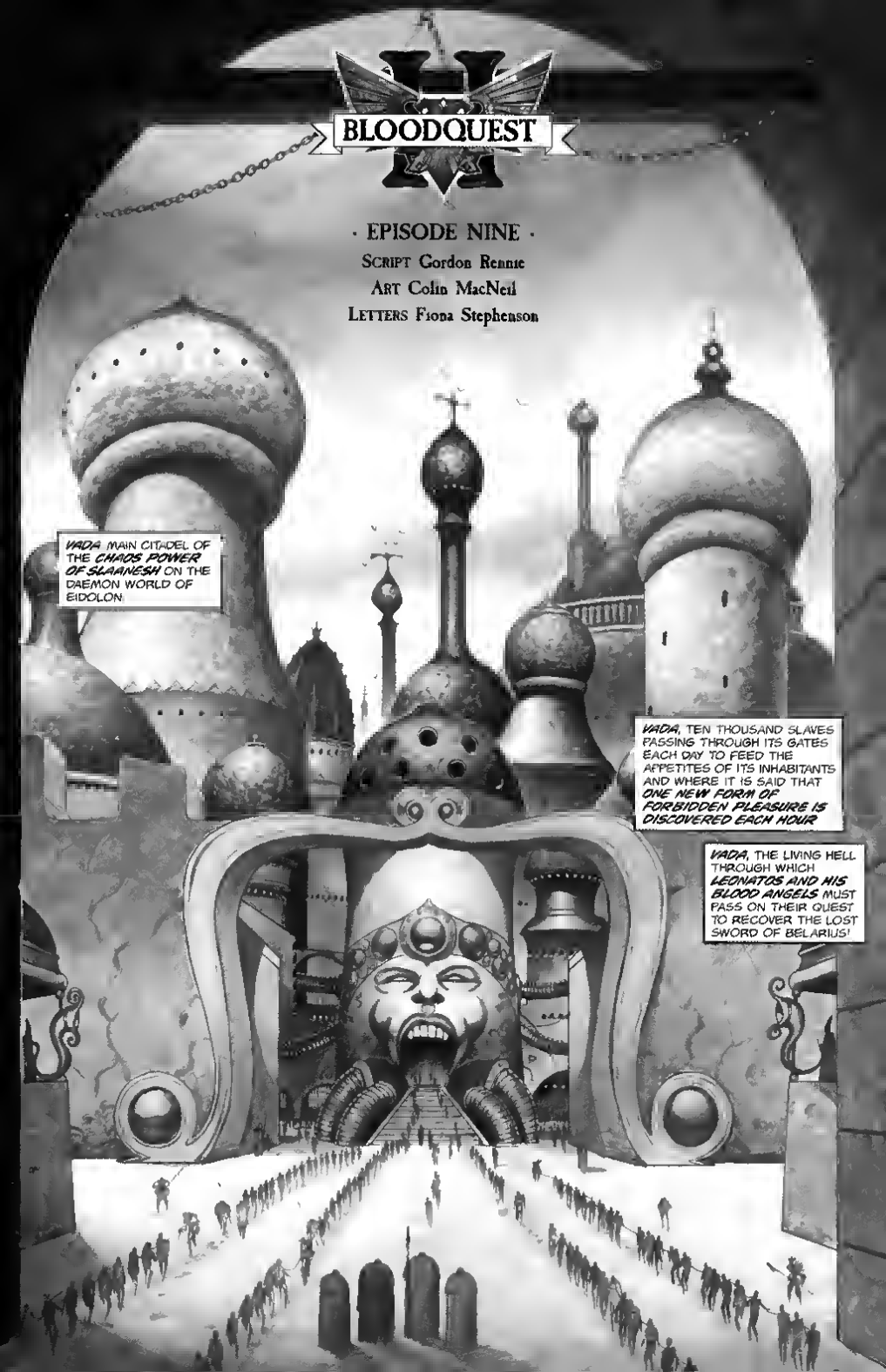



BLOODQUEST
· EPISODE NINE ·
SCRIPT Gordon Rennie
ART Colin MacNeil
LETTERS Fiona Stephenson
VADA, MAIN CITADEL OF THE CHAOS POWER OF SLAANESH ON THE DAEMON WORLD OF EIDOLON.
VADA, TEN THOUSAND SLAVES PASSING THROUGH ITS GATES EACH DAY TO FEED THE APPETITES OF ITS INHABITANTS AND WHERE IT IS SAID THAT ONE NEW FORM OF FORBIDDEN PLEASURE IS DISCOVERED EACH HOUR
VADA, THE LIVING HELL THROUGH WHICH LEONATOS AND HIS BLOOD ANGELS MUST PASS ON THEIR QUEST TO RECOVER THE LOST SWORD OF BELARIUS!

FOR IT IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE *CITY OF TEMPTATION*, AND IT IS SAID THAT THERE IS SOMETHING HERE AMONGST THE MYRIAD PLEASURES AND SINS ON OFFER TO TEMPT EVEN THE STRONGEST SOUL
STRANGERS! WELCOME TO VADA, MY FRIENDS. WHATEVER PLEASURES YOU SEEK, I PROMISE YOU'LL FIND NOTHING TO COMPARE WITH WHAT I HAVE HERE IN MY HAND!
THE ESSENCE OF A THOUSAND SOULS IN AGONY.
DISTILLED AND PURIFIED INTO ITS FINEST FORM. SAVOUR THE EXQUISITE FLAVOUR OF THEIR PAIN AND TORMENT! TASTE THE THRILL OF THEIR TORTURE AND DAMNATION!
COME, MY FRIEND. WHAT PRICE WOULDN'T YOU OFFER FOR SUCH A RARE TREAT...!?
CHHHK
SNAP

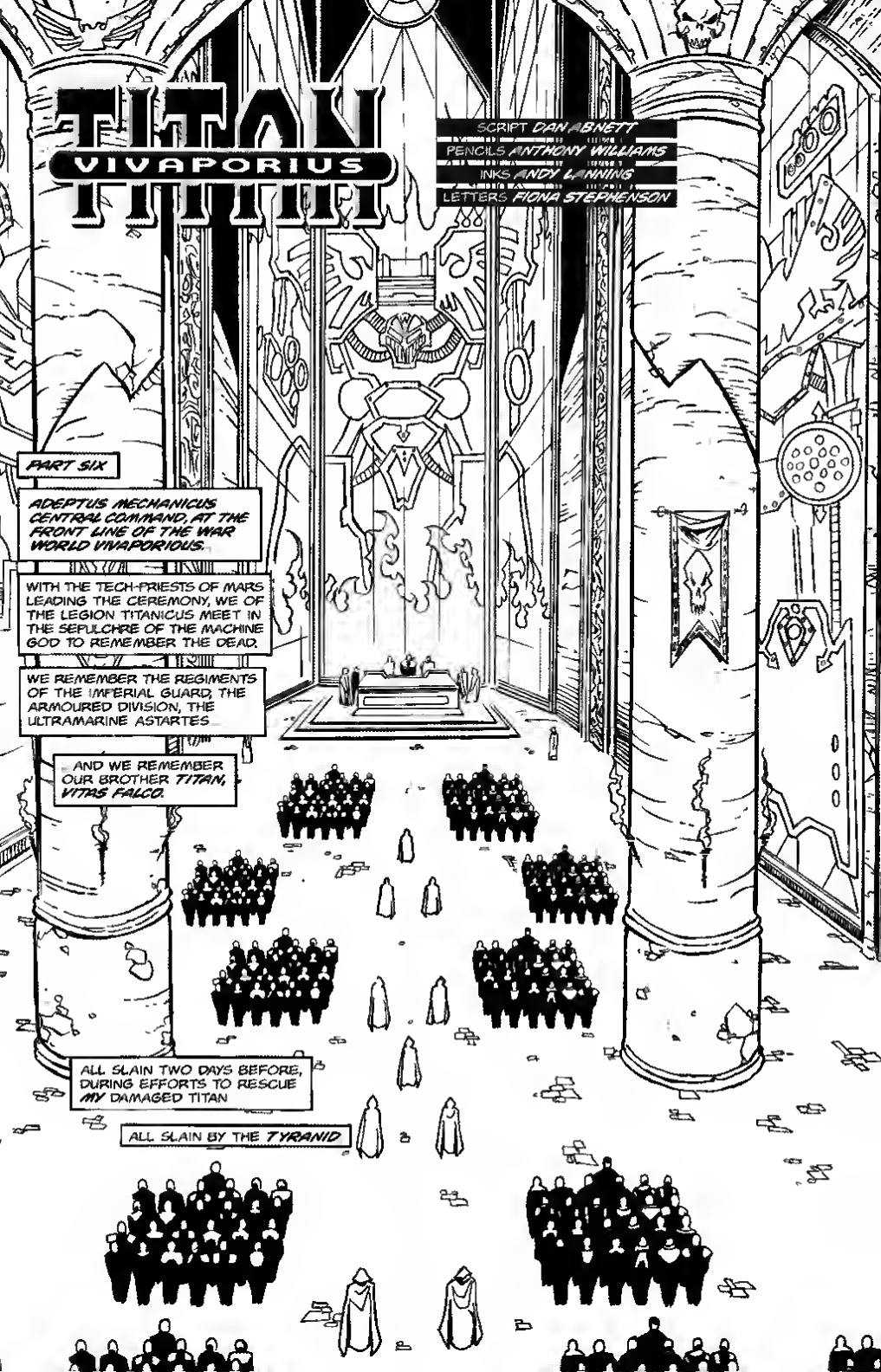
THE BLOOD ANGELS CONTINUE ON, CLOSING THEIR MINDS TO THE DEPRAVED WAYS OF THE CITIZENS OF VADA.
BUT SLAANESH'S INVISIBLE TENDRILS ARE EVERYWHERE, PROBING FOR THAT ONE WEAKNESS OR TEMPTATION WHICH CAN TURN ANY BEING INTO THE PLEASURE GOD'S PLAYTHING
PROTEUS
PROTEUS
PROTEUS COME TO ME PROTEUS
COME TO ME PROTEUS COME TO ME NOW
COME, PROTEUS THIS WAY

AH. THERE YOU ARE, PROTEUS. WELCOME...
I AM THE MISTRESS OF VADA. I AM THE BRIDE OF THE PLEASURE GOD. I AM SLAANESH'S CHOSEN CHAMPION HERE ON THIS WORLD.
WELCOME TO MY HOME. WE HAVE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.

WHY... WHY AM I HERE..?
BECAUSE I WISHED IT SO
COME CLOSER, LITTLE MARINE. DON'T BE AFRAID OF MY PETS. THEY'RE ALWAYS JEALOUS WHENEVER I ACQUIRE A NEW PLAYTHING.
YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE I CALLED YOU. THIS IS VADA, THE CITY OF TEMPTATIONS. THE PLACE WHERE ALL FANTASIES CAN BE MADE FLESH
I HAVE SEEN INTO YOUR MIND, LITTLE MARINE. I KNOW YOUR INNERMOST SECRET DESIRES. SERVE ME WELL, AND I WILL MAKE THEM REAL FOR YOU.
YOU DREAM OF BEING A GREAT WARRIOR. A HERO. YOU DREAM OF CONQUESTS, OF BATTLE HONOURS, OF THE GLORIES OF WAR.
YOU ARE A GREAT WARRIOR, PROTEUS. YOU HAVE ENTERED THE EYE OF TERROR, YOU HAVE FOUGHT YOUR WAY ACROSS A DAEMON WORLD. ONLY THE GREATEST OF WARRIORS COULD HAVE SURVIVED THIS FAR.
NO... IT IS CAPTAIN LEONATOS WHO HAS BROUGHT US THIS FAR. HE IS THE HERO, NOT I...
LEONATOS IS A SLAVE. A SLAVE TO DUTY. A SLAVE TO 'HONOUR'. A SLAVE TO HIS WEAKLING EMPEROR. HE WILL FAIL, AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIM WILL DIE WITH HIM.
AND EVEN IF HE SHOULD SUCCEED IN HIS FOOL'S QUEST, WHAT THEN FOR YOU, LITTLE MARINE?

A RETURN TO THE RANKS OF THE SCOUT COMPANY? AND THEN CENTURIES OF FAITHFUL SERVICE IN A MARINE COMPANY, JUST ONE OF A HUNDRED OTHER BATTLE BROTHERS?
YOU DESERVE BETTER, PROUD PROTEUS. AND I CAN OFFER YOU OH SO VERY MUCH MORE.
BUT... BUT I...
JOIN ME. SWEAR YOUR LOYALTY TO THE PLEASURE GOD AND I SHALL MAKE REAL ALL YOUR DREAMS, PROUD PROTEUS. ARMIES WILL BE YOURS TO COMMAND. ENTIRE WORLDS WILL BE YOURS TO CONQUER.
THE CHOICE IS YOURS, LITTLE MARINE. CHOOSE NOW, AND CHOOSE WISELY.
MY QUEEN.

NOTHING, LIEGE-CAPTAIN?
I RETRACED OUR ROUTE, VENTURED AS FAR BACK INTO THE CITY AS I DARED EMPEROR'S OATH, I COULD WANDER THAT PLACE FOR A CENTURY AND STILL NOT EXPLORE IT ALL!
THEN WE GO BACK THERE IN FORCE AND TAKE VENGEANCE ON THE CHAOS FILTH!
NO...
WE GO ON. NEVER BACK. PROTEUS IS LOST TO US NOW AND SO WE GO ON TOWARDS THE END OF OUR MISSION WE HAVE CROSSED THE TERRITORIES OF THREE DAEMON LORDS AND WE HAVE LOST THREE BATTLE BROTHERS ALONG THE WAY
NOW THERE ARE ONLY THREE OF US REMAINING, AND ONE DAEMON TERRITORY LEFT TO ENTER. WE GO ON INTO IT. INTO THE KINGDOM OF THE CHANGER OF THE WAYS.
NEXT: THE LABYRINTH!


TITAN
VIVAPORIUS
SCRIPT DAN ABNETT
PENCILS ANTHONY WILLIAMS
INKS ANDY LANNING
LETTERS FIONA STEPHENSON
PART SIX
ADEPTUS MECHANICUS CENTRAL COMMAND, AT THE FRONT LINE OF THE WAR WORLD VIVAPORIUS.
WITH THE TECH-PRIESTS OF MARS LEADING THE CEREMONY, WE OF THE LEGION TITANICUS MEET IN THE SEPULCHRE OF THE MACHINE GOD TO REMEMBER THE DEAD.
WE REMEMBER THE REGIMENTS OF THE IMPERIAL GUARD, THE ARMOURED DIVISION, THE ULTRAMARINE ASTARTES...
...AND WE REMEMBER OUR BROTHER TITAN, VITAS FALCO.
ALL SLAIN TWO DAYS BEFORE, DURING EFFORTS TO RESCUE MY DAMAGED TITAN
ALL SLAIN BY THE TYRANID

I AM PRINCEPS HEKATE OF IMPERIUS DICTATIO.
I REMEMBER THE SCREAMS OF THE DYING AND THE SUDDEN SILENCE OF THE DEAD
AND I REMEMBER MY HELPLESSNESS
THE TYRANID ARE LIKE NO FOE I HAVE EVER FACED BEFORE.
I NEVER THOUGHT THERE COULD BE A POWER IN THE GALAXY TO MATCH THE MACHINE GODS.
ONCE DICTATIO IS REPAIRED, I KNOW I MUST GO BACK OUT AND FACE THEM.
BUT BY THE THRONE OF EARTH, I AM TERRIFIED THAT MY COURAGE WILL FAIL.
THE SERVICE FINISHES. WE RETURN TO OUR DUTIES.
I KNOW I CAN TELL NO ONE OF MY DOUBTS.
PRINCEPS HEKATE!

PRINCEPS INDERON
WELL MET, THOUGH THE CIRCUMSTANCES ARE GRAVE
WELL MET, FLESH TO FLESH
TONIGHT I TAKE REGALIS ANNIHILATUS OUT INTO THE FIRE ZONE.
LEGION COMMAND HAS GRANTED ME LEAVE TO CARRY OUT A REVENGE STRIKE AGAINST THE FOE IN MEMORY OF FALCO
MODERATI VOSS? WILL OUR REPAIRS BE COMPLETE BY TONIGHT?
SO THE TECH-PRIESTS SAY, PRINCEPS
THEN IMPERIUS DICTATIO WILL JOIN YOU IN THIS
THE BLOOD OF FALCO IS ON MY HANDS
IT PLEASES ME THAT WE WILL FIGHT TOGETHER GLORY OR DEATH.
" GLORY OR DEATH " I ANSWER HIM, BUT MY HEART IS HEAVY
AM I ONLY AGREEING TO GO ALONG BECAUSE I DO NOT WANT TO VENTURE FORTH ALONE?

NIGHT FALLS OUR MISSION BEGINS
THE PRIESTS HAVE MADE DICTATIO WHOLE AGAIN AND I THRILL WITH THE RENEWED POWER AT MY COMMAND
BUT STILL UNEASE PLAGUES MY MIND
IF I SHOULD FREEZE HESITATE... IF MY NERVE SHOULD FAIL WHEN THE FOE AP
ANNIHILATUS TO DICTATIO!
I'M READING MOVEMENT IN THE WEED FOREST A
THEY LIE IN WAIT FOR US. LET US NOT DISAPPOINT THEM! GLORY OR DEATH!
INDERON'S BRAVE WORDS URGE ME ON BUT A PULSE BEGINS TO BEAT IN MY THROAT
VISIBILITY IS LOW. SHADOWS MOVE AROUND US...

IN MINUTES, I HAVE LOST SIGHT OF HIM.
ANNIHILATUS! RESPOND! I HAVE LOST VISUAL CONTACT WITH YOU!
ANNIHILATUS!
INDERON! RESPOND! GIVE ME YOUR POSITION!
SILENCE ANSWERS ME...
... SKKZZ
... EKATE! THEY CAME F...
SKKKZZZ
... CAN'T...
... SKKZZ
... AIIGGH!
NALLEN! SOURCE THAT SIGNAL! BRING US ABOUT! FULL POWER! PRIME THE WEAPONS!
FIND ANNIHILATUS NOW!
SCREAMS AND STATIC FILL THE RADIO LINK.
I REACH OUT THROUGH THE MIND IMPULSE TO FIND INDERON

...AND I SEE WHAT *HE* SEES. I FEEL WHAT *HE* FEELS.
THE BIOVORES RETCH BALLS OF SLIME THAT SPLATTER AND HARDEN AROUND THE TITAN'S HULL.
HIS LIMBS STIFFEN AND FUSE.
TRAPPED, HELPLESS, STIFLED...
...INDERON *SCREAMS* IN MY MIND.
AND HE IS SCREAMING AS THEY DRAG HIM AWAY.

INDERON! INDERON!
THEY HAVE HIM. THEY HAVE DONE THE IMPOSSIBLE
THEY HAVE TAKEN A TITAN ALIVE
AND THEY HAVE DONE ONE OTHER THING
...THEY HAVE FUELLED MY WILL. MY FEAR IS GONE! I HAVE COURAGE AND REASON TO FIGHT ONCE AGAIN
" GLORY OR DEATH " I PROMISED PRINCEPS INDERON
I AM IMPERIUS DICTATIO I KNOW NO FEAR.
I WILL HAVE GLORY, AND THE TYRANIDS WILL HAVE DEATH
NEXT -- THE PHANTOM TITANS

Mordheim – City of the Damned

Script – Gordon Rennie
Art – Karl Kopinski
Letters – Gordon Robson

2: PIT FIGHT!

MORDHEIM, WHERE CUT-THROAT BANDS OF FORTUNE HUNTERS SCOUR THE RUINS FOR DEPOSITS OF MAGICAL WYRDSTONE PITCHED BATTLES ARE OFTEN FOUGHT OVER DISPUTED TERRITORIES. BUT THE SCAVENGER GANGS HAVE ALSO FOUND OTHER WAYS TO SETTLE THEIR DIFFERENCES
ORDEAL BY UNARMED COMBAT! ONE CHAMPION FROM EACH WARBAND, ALL OF THEM FIGHTING FOR POSSESSION OF A SMALL PIECE OF WYRDSTONE
WHOOK!
THE RULES ARE SIMPLE. WHOEVER IS LEFT STANDING WITH THE WYRDSTONE IN HIS HAND WINS THE FIGHT AND THE RIGHT TO CLAIM THE DISPUTED TERRITORY!
MINE!
NO, MINE!
NO, MINE!
NO, YOU'RE BOTH WRONG
IT'S MINE
SMATCH!

EH?
FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE EMPIRE AND BEYOND THEY COME THE SCUM OF THE OLD WORLD, SEEKING THEIR FORTUNES IN THE CITY OF THE DAMNED--
ULLI LEITPOLD, A MIDDENHEIM MERCENARY TURNED BANDIT AND THIEF.
GOTTLIEB ZELLER, A CRAZED FLAGELLANT FOR WHOM PAIN NO LONGER HAS ANY MEANING!
IVAN DRAKHOV, THE PRAAG STRANGLER, WHO BOASTS THAT HE ONCE KILLED A TROLL WITH HIS BARE HANDS!
GRUGNAR ALSO-DOOMLADEN, A TROLLSLAYER WHO HAS COME TO MORDHEIM IN SEARCH OF HIS MISSING BROTHER!

FINALLY, ONLY TWO OF THEM ARE LEFT...
BLINDSIDE HIM, ULLI! GO FOR HIS EYES AND THEN KICK HIM HARD IN THE LOWER VAULTS!
MARQUAND VOLKER, MARIENBURG GAMBLER AND ASSASSIN, IS ULLI'S LOYAL BUSINESS PARTNER.
FIFTY CROWNS SAYS THE DWARF SNAPS HIS NECK. DOUBLE IF IT'S A CLEAN BREAK AND MY BOY DOESN'T EVEN HAVE TIME TO SCREAM.
YIELD, MANLING! GIVE ME THE WYRDSTONE AND I'LL GIVE YOU A CLEAN DEATH INSTEAD OF LEAVING YOU A HELPLESS CRIPPLE!
UUUGH YOU WANT THIS...?
HERE, CHOKE ON IT!
SKUTCH!
GGGGGGGGGGGGHH KKKH
INTRODUCE IT INTO LIVING FLESH IN ITS UNREFINED FORM, THOUGH, AND THE RESULT CAN BE EQUALLY SPECTACULAR!
SPLAT!
WYRDSTONE, CONCENTRATED CHAOS-STUFF IN ITS RAWEST FORM. REFINED, IT IS ALMOST PRICELESS, CAPABLE OF RAISING THE DEAD OR TURNING LEAD INTO GOLD--
GOOD WORK ULLI! I NEVER DOUBTED YOU COULD DO IT AND NOW WE'VE GOT FIRST CLAIM ON A NEW WYRDSTONE SITE
SAY, YOU COULDN'T LEND ME FIFTY CROWNS, COULD YOU? ONLY I NEED SOME CASH TO COVER A FEW DEBTS, AND--
THE END

KAL JERICO
IN
LICENCED TO KILL
THREE MEMBERS OF THE OUTLAW ASH BANDITS GANG OPEN BOUNTY OF THIRTY CREDITS APIECE
NEXT!
DO NOT
RAIFE FORTUNA, WANTED FOR MURDER, ROBBERY, TORTURE AND - MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL - NON-PAYMENT OF GUILD LEVIES
TWO ACCOMPLICES, AS WELL. ONE OF THEMS PROBABLY WORTH SOMETHING ! RECOGNISED HIS FACE FROM AN OLD BOUNTY POSTER
AND THE OTHER ONE?
DIFFICULT TO SAY, MY PARTNER HERE GOT SOMEWHAT CARRIED AWAY DURING THE GUNFIGHT AND BLEW HIS FACE OFF WITH A STICKY DUM-DUM.
Script GORDON RENNIE • Art WAYNE REYNOLDS • Letters FIONA STEPHENSON

ONE HUNDRED CRED HALF BOUNTY ON THE DEAD LEVY DODGER, NOTHING FOR THE LOSER WITH NO FACE AND WE'LL SEE WHAT WE'VE GOT ON THE OTHER ONE
NEXT!
KAL JERICO, ISN'T IT?
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU...
I SEE AND YOU ARE...?
OLEG KASPO ME AND MY BOYS ARE THE NEW WATCHMEN GANG FOR THIS SETTLEMENT ZONE
AH YES. NOW I REMEMBER THEY NEVER DID FIND OUT WHO AMBUSHED AND WIPED OUT THE LAST WATCHMEN GANG WE HAD, DID THEY?
NEW WATCHMEN GANG, NEW WAYS OF DOING THINGS THIS SETTLEMENT IS UNDER OUR PROTECTION NOW. YOU WANT TO OPERATE HERE, YOU HAVE TO OBEY THE RULES
HMM, I WAS WONDERING WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO GET ROUND TO MAKING THE USUAL EXTORTION DEMANDS.
YOUR BOUNTY HUNTER LICENCE IS HEREBY TERMINATED YOU GOT FIVE DAYS TO RENEW IT, AND THE FEE IS FIVE HUNDRED CREDS AFTER THAT ME AND MY BOYS GET THIRTY PER CENT OF ALL YOUR BOUNTY MONEY AS FART OF A NEW LOCAL LAW AND ORDER TAX.

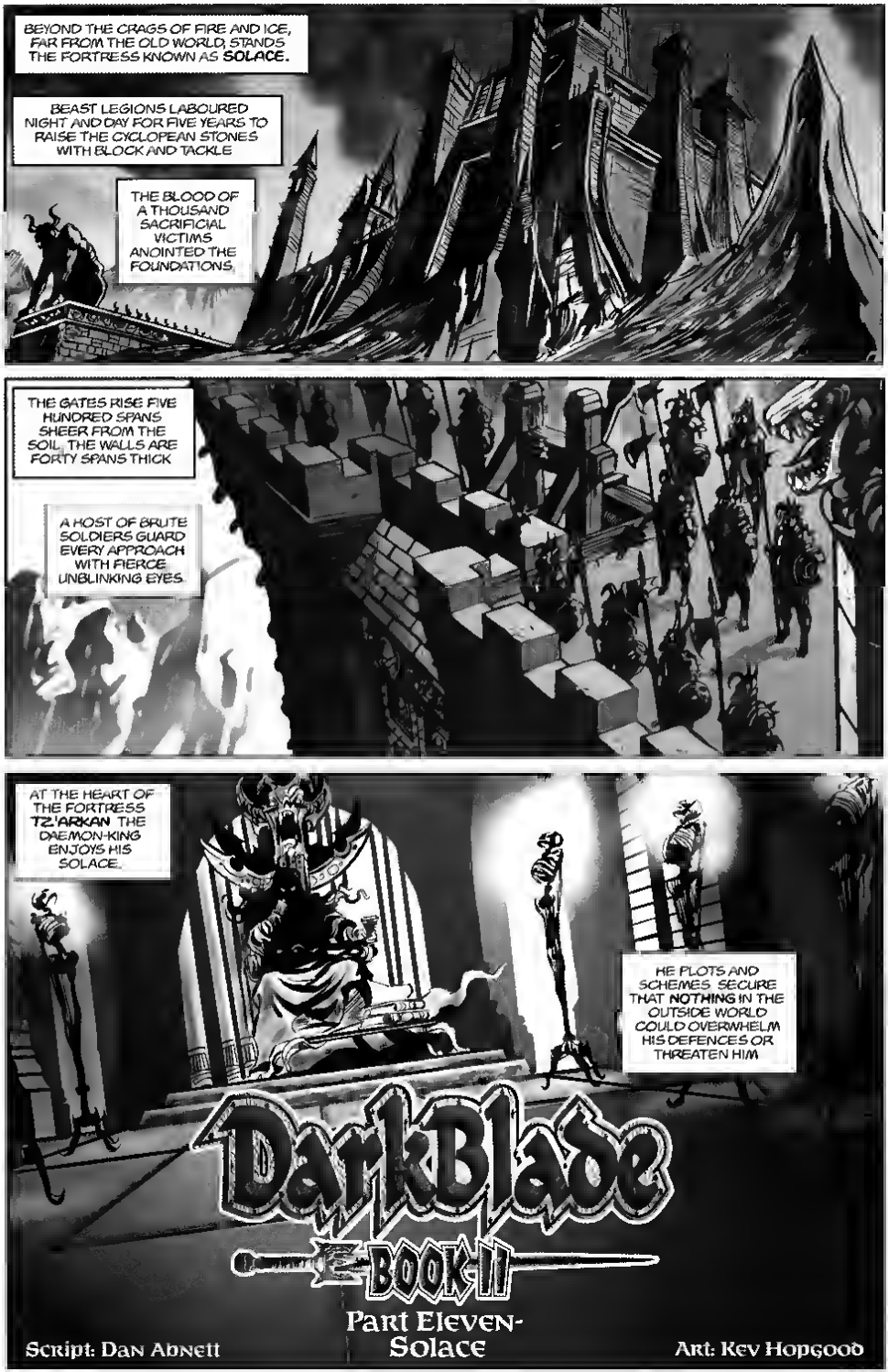
UNLICENSED BOUNTY HUNTERS ARE ILLEGAL, AND ME AND MY BOYS INTEND TO COME DOWN HARD ON THEM.
THIS HERE'S A LAW-ABIDING SETTLEMENT, AND WE CAN'T HAVE HEAVILY-ARMED OUTLAW DESPERADOES HANGING ABOUT THESE PARTS NOW, CAN WE?
FIVE DAYS, JERICO. IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID UP BY THEN, WE COME LOOKING FOR YOU.
SO WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? WE'RE NOT ACTUALLY GOING TO PAY THEM, ARE WE?
KAL..?
OF COURSE NOT. WE'RE GOING TO SIT AROUND ENJOYING OURSELVES WHILE WE WAIT FOR THEM TO COME BACK AND KILL US
WELL THAT'S WHAT I'M GOING TO BE DOING YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAVE A JOB TO DO.
COME, SCABBS. LET US RETIRE TO A NEARBY HOSTELRY FOR A FEW PINTS OF THEIR FINEST WILDSNAKE BREW WHILE I TELL YOU WHAT I WANT YOU TO DO.
DAY ONE: WITH SCABBS GONE, KAL GOES ABOUT HIS NORMAL EVERYDAY UNDERHIVE BUSINESS...

DAY TWO
DAY THREE.
PLUTONIUM FALLS
WANTED
DAY FOUR.
SUMP HOLE
DAY FIVE:
SUMP HOLE BAR

TIME'S UP, JERICO. I SEE YOUR LITTLE HALF BREED FRIEND DIDN'T HANG ABOUT TO HELP YOU
SCABBS? OH, HE'S AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE
IN FACT, HE WAS HERE NOT TOO LONG AGO HE STOPPED OFF JUST LONG ENOUGH TO GIVE ME THIS BEFORE I SENT HIM OFF ON ANOTHER ERRAND
LOOK FAMILIAR?
I RECOGNISED THOSE MARKS ON YOUR FACE AND NECK. THEY'RE SURGICAL SCARS WHERE YOUR CYBER-IMPLANTS AND OWNERSHIP STUDS USED TO BE. AFTER I REALISED THAT, THE REST WAS EASY
WANTED
escaped slave
reward
300.
GUILD
YOU AND YOUR GANG ARE ALL OUTLAWS. SCABBS FOUND SHOOT-TO-KILL BOUNTY WARRANTS ON ALL OF YOU OVER AT THE GUILDER TRADING POST AT PLUTONIUM FALLS
SWAMP HOLE BAR
AND, WHAT? YOU'RE GOING TO TRY AND TAKE US ALL IN BY YOURSELF?
K-I-HAK!
WOULDN'T DREAM OF IT. THAT'S WHY I SENT SCABBS OFF TO BRING BACK A FEW OF OUR COLLEAGUES IN THE BUSINESS.
CHAK!
KIK!

UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, SHARING THE BOUNTY MONEY DIDN'T SEEM SUCH A BAD IDEA!
KRAKOW!
BLAM
FDOW!
CRUNCH!
ZAK!
BOOOM!
PANG!

ZAK!
EVERYONE ON OUR SIDE MAKE IT?
MAD MARKO'S DEAD A COUPLE OF NEW FACES FROM UP-HIVE JUST SAW THEIR FIRST AND LAST GUNFIGHT AND I THINK HARD LUCK HEPS GOING TO BE LOOKING FOR YET ANOTHER BOUNTY HUNTING PARTNER
SOUNDS GOOD TO ME MORE CREDS FOR THE REST OF US
SO WHAT'S THE DEAL, JERICO? HOW ARE WE GOING TO SPLIT THE COMBINED BOUNTY ON THIS ONE?
THE USUAL WAY SEEMS THE SIMPLEST
SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST! LAST MAN STANDING GETS HALF THE POT AND EVERYONE ELSE GETS AN EQUAL SHARE OF WHAT'S LEFT!
WOK!
THE END


BEYOND THE CRAGS OF FIRE AND ICE, FAR FROM THE OLD WORLD, STANDS THE FORTRESS KNOWN AS SOLACE.
BEAST LEGIONS LABOURED NIGHT AND DAY FOR FIVE YEARS TO RAISE THE CYCLOPEAN STONES WITH BLOCK AND TACKLE
THE BLOOD OF A THOUSAND SACRIFICIAL VICTIMS ANOINTED THE FOUNDATIONS.
THE GATES RISE FIVE HUNDRED SPANS SHEER FROM THE SOIL. THE WALLS ARE FORTY SPANS THICK
A HOST OF BRUTE SOLDIERS GUARD EVERY APPROACH WITH FIERCE UNBLINKING EYES.
AT THE HEART OF THE FORTRESS TZ'ARKAN THE DAEMON-KING ENJOYS HIS SOLACE.
HE PLOTS AND SCHEMES. SECURE THAT NOTHING IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD COULD OVERWHELM HIS DEFENCES OR THREATEN HIM.
DarkBlade
BOOK II
Part Eleven- Solace
Script: Dan Abnett
Art: Kev Hopgood

TZ'ARKAN! DAEMON-LORD!
EH? WHO SPEAKS TO ME FROM THE SHADOWS?
SHOW YOURSELF!
VERY WELL.
REMEMBER ME?
BLOOD OF ETERNITY! DARKBLADE?

I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT IN HERE, ANCIENT ENEMY. BUT YOU WILL NOT LIVE A HEARTBEAT LONGER!
BUT A DARK-ELF SWORDSMAN! I AM A DAEMON-KING OF MEASURELESS WRATH! I WILL TEAR YOU APART!
WRONG, DAEMON. I AM MORE THAN JUST A DARK-ELF..
...I AM A WARRIOR WHO HAS TRACKED THE ENDS OF CREATION IN HIS QUEST TO FIND YOU.
I AM A WARRIOR MADE A RELENTLESS FORCE IN MY DESIRE TO PUNISH YOU.
I AM YOUR NEMESIS, TZ'ARKAN, AND I WANT MY SOUL BACK.
AS FOR YOU, YOU SEEM TO BE...
...HELPLESS.
ARGHHHH!

THIS WARP GEM I TOOK FROM SITHRAS ELGOL
HE INSTRUCTED ME IN ITS USE SHOWED ME HOW TO FIND YOU AND TAKE MY SOUL BACK
AAAIEEGHH!
B-BUT HOW D-DID YOU GET IN HERE?
YOUR DEFENCES WERE NOTHING.
THE PORTALS OF OTHERNESSE BROUGHT ME HERE TO YOUR VERY PRESENCE AS WAS MY HEARTS DESIRE
I-IMPOSSIBLE! N-NO ONE EVER LEAVES OTHERNESSE...
N-NO ONE EVER ESCAPES THE G-GOD CHILD!
IT SEEMS EVERYONE UNDERESTIMATES MALUS DARKBLADE!

NOW! LET'S TO BUSINESS!
CHINK!
I HAVE YOU **BOUND**, DAEMON AND NOW MUST SIMPLY RECITE THE MAGICS THAT WILL **REPOSSESS** MY SOUL!
HERE'S THE SPELL, DAEMON! FLAYED FROM SITHRAS ELGOL'S OWN **HIDE**!
W-WE CAN MAKE A PACT! A DEAL! NOOO!
MALUS DARKBLADE DOES NOT LISTEN. HE RECITES THE INCANTATION AND RIPS HIS **LIVING SOUL** FROM THE DAEMON-KING.

AND THEN THERE IS SILENCE, BROKEN ONLY BY THE DAEMON'S WAILING
MY SOUL IS MINE AGAIN, AT LAST!
PAH! QUIT YOUR SHRIEKING DAEMON!
I MAKE NO SOUND, MALUS. THAT SHRIEKING IS...
...OUTSIDE.
I HAVE HEARD IT ONCE BEFORE. LONG AGO.
I NEVER WISHED TO HEAR IT AGAIN. IT HAUNTS MY NIGHTMARES
WHAT MADNESS IS IT YOU SPEAK?
LOOK! BEHOLD! THE SCREAMING COMES.
YOU CHEATED YOUR WAY OUT OF THERNESSE...
"NOW THE GOD-CHILD, INSANE WITH RAGE, COMES TO PUNISH YOU!"
NEXT: ANNIHILATION!